

BRITISH ROCK 'N' ROLL DANCESPORT FEDERATION

Meeting held on 4 October 2008
5:45pm, St. Augustine's Church, Cambridge

MINUTES

Attendees: Steve Romans (SR)
Nick Jones (NJ)
Zara Jealous (ZJ)
Laura Cope (Minutes) (LC)
Ian Sudbery (IS)
Claude Schneider (CS)
Mark Clewlow (Chair) (MC)
Jean Leclerc (JL)
Adam Fincham (AF)
Adrian Potter (AP)
Christine Rowan (CR)
Emily Green (EG)
Rachelle Stretch (RS)
Katie Walland (KW)
Stefan Turok (ST)
Jonathan Dormand (JD)
Michelle Pesci (MP)
Hannah Whiteoak (HW)

Apologies: Barny Golder Charlie Romito Chris Horner
Ed Borgstein James Hyde Jenny Murdoch
Linette Tan Peter Smith Sam Maddrell
Samantha Foulds Sarah Woods Amy Oliver
Brian Cowe Graham Smith Maurice Ringer
Nichola Burns Ros Frost Georgi Belov
Magda Guido Rings Christine Keeble
Derek Young David Corfield

Item	Minutes	Action
1	Welcome	
1.a	Steve Romans to welcome Steve Romans welcomed everyone to the meeting, the inaugural AGM of the newly established British Rock 'n' Roll DanceSport Federation (BRRF).	

<p>1.b</p>	<p>Mark Clewlow to chair remainder of meeting</p> <p>Mark Clewlow chaired the remainder of the meeting.</p>	
<p>2</p> <p>2.a</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Who’s who?</p> <p>Each person present at the meeting introduced themselves and described their dancing background.</p>	
<p>3</p> <p>3.a</p> <p>3.a.i</p> <p>3.a.ii</p>	<p>Why have we formed the BRRF</p> <p>Cambridge University to show footage of their dancers</p> <p>Videos were shown of two team performances danced at May Balls in June 2008. These were “In the Mood”, consisting of an authentic style of acrobatic Rock ‘n’ Roll with the emphasis being on footwork, and “Don’t Stop Me Now”, a modern style of acrobatic Rock ‘n’ Roll with higher level acrobatics.</p> <p>Team members to present experiences of competitions, workshops and demonstrations</p> <p>Guido Rings to present problems with UK competition regulation</p> <p>In Guido’s absence, Mark Clewlow and Rachelle Stretch (former head of the Inter Varsity Dance Association (IVDA)), with input from other Cambridge team members, reported on this agenda point. The following issues with the IVDA competition (the largest UK student dance competition and the largest UK acrobatic rock ‘n’ roll competition) in particular and other similar events were described.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The rock ‘n’ roll competition must be completed within a 20 minute time-frame. 2. The competition takes place on a ballroom floor. 3. The judges are ballroom judges and are not trained to judge rock ‘n’ roll. 4. The music does not match the type of music played at international rock ‘n’ roll competitions; the style is usually from several decades ago and the speed varies considerably across different competitions and individual rounds. This means that couples cannot practise a routine to a particular speed of music. 5. Too many couples are required to dance on the floor at the same time during each round, which means that judges cannot rate whole routines, only short segments or glimpses as they walk around. 6. Due to many couples dancing their routines at the same time on the dance floor, 	

there is sometimes insufficient space for couples dancing acrobatic routines to perform in safety which can potentially lead to dangerous situations.

7. Out of perhaps 50 couples entering the competition, perhaps only 10 couples will be serious competitors dancing the modern European acrobatic style of rock 'n' roll, and 90% of these serious couples would usually be from the Cambridge team. Other competitors are either jive couples hoping for a lucky chance, or authentic-style couples displaying little or no acrobatics.

8. A single competition usually covers both acrobatic and non-acrobatic rock 'n' roll, meaning that footwork-only couples are being judged against couples who incorporate acrobatics into their routines. Competitions which do segregate the two types often restrict couples to enter only one of the two competitions.

9. Due to time restrictions, the breaks between rounds can be too short.

10. Some competitions impose a 'no acrobatics' rule on the grounds that their insurance policy does not cover this.

11. The judges walk around the dance floor, as they would when judging ballroom dancing, which prevents couples from being able to choreograph a routine to a particular front of the stage.

3.b Adam Fincham (Former UK international competitor in A-class) to show footage of his dancing and to present why RnR has failed to take off in the UK in the past

Technical problems prevented the showing of any video footage.

Adam Fincham described in detail issues with rock 'n' roll in the UK in the past. He began by mentioning that "nothing has changed" competing-wise.

Rock 'n' roll was always put on the back of disco competitions – there was no separate rock 'n' roll competition. In the south of England, the style of rock 'n' roll danced tended to be the "kick-ball-change" European style, whereas cities north of Birmingham were dancing jive steps. Both styles of dance were competing against one another in the same rock 'n' roll competitions.

After a meeting of several dance clubs to discuss the issue, a decision was made to adopt the European style for rock 'n' roll competitions. Mecca Entertainment became interested in the style of the dance because people liked to watch it. They were interested in producing a TV show, sponsored by Budweiser, to represent talented acrobatic rock 'n' roll couples from across Europe.

Mecca Entertainment decided to set-up a UK Rock 'n' Roll Championship, which was successful for about 4-5 years. Scotland also became involved in this. A world professional championship called the "World Trophy" was established and coordinated on the back of the World Latin Championships in Bournemouth during a one-hour time slot in the evening. The reason that this competition was to be professional was that it would generate more money this way.

Unfortunately at that time, Adam and Kelly were both amateur rock 'n' roll dancers so could not immediately compete in the competition. After negotiations, they agreed to turn professional and so competed representing the UK. This competition enabled people to see what rock 'n' roll was actually like, and so rock 'n' roll began to become more successful. But rock 'n' roll at that time didn't have the numbers to keep it going and so unfortunately this organising of the championship petered out.

Adam and Kelly tried to promote rock 'n' roll in the UK by approaching dance schools and offering to introduce and teach the style. Most clubs were resistant to this idea though, preferring to teach their own dance styles. However, they managed to set-up a UK rock 'n' roll squad by asking dance teachers from across the country to send their most successful couples to London once a month for a full day of training. The idea behind this scheme was that these couples would then return to their respective clubs and teach the other members of their club, thereby spreading the knowledge of rock 'n' roll. A range of ages was selected to join the training sessions in London, from 6 years up to adult and all trained together focussing on strength work (including core body strength), footwork and lift work.

Adam Fincham offered some advice for the organising of rock 'n' roll in the future:

1. Don't turn anyone away who expresses an interest in being involved.
2. Organise separate competitions for each style of dance, such as jive, European style footwork only, European style acrobatic rock 'n' roll etc.
3. Prepare a syllabus for rock 'n' roll detailing the moves and how to learn them.
4. In competitions, ensure that there are only two couples dancing on the floor at any one time.
5. The length of each round should be inline with current European regulations: 1 minute 30 seconds for the acrobatic round and 1 minute 45 seconds for the footwork round.
6. Music should be the same speed across rounds, ideally the European speed. For a set period of time, in the first instance, while dancers are adjusting to the new tempo, it would be acceptable to agree upon a drop in the speed of the music, so long as it is made aware to dancers what this reduced speed would be and that after a certain date, the speed would increase to full speed.

3.c Steve Romans to present why forming the BRRF will help us to move forward

Steve Romans outlined two fundamental reasons why forming the BRRF will help us to move forward:

1. It will help to promote and regulate modern rock 'n' roll dancing in the UK.
2. It will enable the selection of a British Team to compete at international competitions.

<p>4</p> <p>4.a</p> <p>4.b</p>	<p>Will anyone recognize the BRRF as the governing body of RnR?</p> <p>WRRC – Steve Romans to present</p> <p>Steve Romans informed the meeting that he has been in contact with Miriam Kerpan Izak (president of the WRRC) who says that the WRRC will recognize the BRRF as the governing body of rock ‘n’ roll dancing in the UK.</p> <p>EADA – Rachelle Stretch to present</p> <p>Rachelle Stretch, the Publicity Officer for EADA, outlined the benefits of the BRRF affiliating to EADA. EADA is recognised by the IDSF (International DanceSport Federation) and the BDC (British Dance Council).</p> <p>The BDC requires that any dancer must be a member of an Amateur association (such as EADA) to compete in a competition above beginner level.</p> <p>EADA has a Child Protection Policy and an Equality Policy.</p> <p>Rachelle emphasized that she was happy to help with publicity of the BRRF, for example the publishing of articles in dance magazines such as ‘Dance News’.</p>	
<p>5</p> <p>5.a</p> <p>5.b</p> <p>5.b.i</p> <p>5.c</p> <p>5.d</p>	<p>Summary of roles on the Executive committee</p> <p>President</p> <p>The duties of the President were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>The duties of the Treasurer were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p> <p>Nick Jones to update us on bank account progress</p> <p>Nick Jones explained that a bank account had not yet been opened. It was agreed a bank account would be opened and that the Secretary would become a signatory for the account together with the Treasurer.</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>The duties of the Secretary were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p> <p>Events Officer</p> <p>The duties of the Events Officer were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p>	<p>NJ/LC</p>

<p>5.e</p>	<p>Competitions Officer</p> <p>The duties of the Competitions Officer were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p>	
<p>5.f</p>	<p>Publicity Officer</p> <p>The duties of the Publicity Officer were recited from the BRRF Statutes (October 2008).</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Motions to the AGM</p>	
<p>6.a</p>	<p>Proposal to accept minutes from last meeting</p>	
	<p>Mark Clewlow outlined the contents of the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were unanimously accepted by all those who had been present.</p>	
<p>6.b</p>	<p>Proposal to accept new members onto the general committee</p>	
	<p>The following persons were already members of the committee:</p>	
	<p>Steve Romans Mark Clewlow Laura Cope Zara Jealous Ian Sudbery Claude Schneider Nick Jones</p>	
	<p>The following persons were nominated to join the general committee:</p>	
	<p>Jonathan Dormand Stefan Turok Hannah Whiteoak Katie Walland Michelle Pesci Adrian Potter Emily Green Christine Rowan Adam Fincham Jean Leclerc</p>	
	<p>All seven existing committee members unanimously agreed to accept all of the nominated persons onto the committee.</p>	
<p>6.c</p>	<p>Proposal to adopt BRRF Statutes</p>	

<p>6.d</p> <p>Proposal to adopt BRRF Competition Rules</p> <p>6.e</p> <p>Proposal to adopt BRRF Equal and Diversity Policy</p> <p>6.f</p> <p>Proposal to adopt BRRF Child Protection Policy</p>	<p>The BRRF statutes were unanimously agreed upon by all present, with two provisos:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voting rights should be reserved for those over the age of 16. 2. The treasurer plus another executive committee member (not necessarily the President) shall be signatories for the BRRF bank account. <p>The BRRF competition rules were unanimously agreed upon by all present, with one proviso:</p> <p>Competition rules may be changed at any time, with notice of the change given at least one month before a BRRF competition.</p> <p>The BRRF Equal and Diversity Policy was unanimously accepted, with one proviso:</p> <p>Steve Romans to clarify with EADA what is meant by discrimination on grounds of means (a concern was raised by Mark Clewlow regarding the interpretation of discrimination on grounds of means and whether this meant that the existence of members who did not have the means to compete would result in all members being refused from doing so).</p> <p>It was agreed by all present that it was appropriate to have a Child Protection Policy, but that that on the table required further work to make it appropriate for the BRRF. The executive committee will make amendments to the BRRF Child Protection Policy and will then vote to adopt it at a later date.</p>	<p>SR</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Hustings for positions on Executive committee</p> <p>Hustings were incorporated into agenda point 8, with each candidate introducing themselves before the relevant point.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Elections to Executive Committee and Results</p> <p>President</p> <p>Steve Romans was unanimously voted by all present to hold the position of President.</p>	

	<p>Treasurer</p> <p>Nick Jones was unanimously voted by all present to hold the position of Treasurer.</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Laura Cope was unanimously voted by all present to hold the position of Secretary.</p> <p>Events Officer</p> <p>Katie Walland and Jean Leclerc were unanimously voted by all present to hold the joint position of Events Officer.</p> <p>Competitions Officer</p> <p>Emily Green was unanimously voted by all present to hold the position of Competitions Officer, with the understanding that Adrian Potter will assist with the duties of this position.</p> <p>Publicity Officer</p> <p>Claude Schneider was unanimously voted by all present to hold the position of Publicity Officer.</p>	
<p>9</p> <p>9.a</p> <p>9.b</p>	<p>Presentations from other UK-based clubs / dancers / coaches</p> <p>Jean Leclerc, Paris Rock Club, London</p> <p>Jean Leclerc described his rock ‘n’ roll club in London, Paris Rock Club, where he teaches the more authentic 1950’s style of rock ‘n’ roll dancing. He showed all present at the meeting a video of his style of dancing at this club.</p> <p>Stefan Turok (Slovakia B-class), London</p> <p>Stefan Turok described the development of rock ‘n’ roll in Slovakia. There was no federation in Slovakia 20 years ago. Around that time, the style of rock ‘n’ roll danced was the authentic 1950’s style, apart from in one club in Bratislava which danced according to European rules.</p> <p>However within two years, rock ‘n’ roll had grown in Slovakia and there were 13-14 clubs. Stefan and his brother established their own club. The clubs started like university dance clubs here in the UK, for adults. Stefan himself started dancing acrobatic rock ‘n’ roll when he was 20-21.</p> <p>Workshops began being organised every two months which were designed to compare the strengths of each club and allow the cross-fertilization of ideas across</p>	

	<p>clubs. The acrobatic style of rock ‘n’ roll became popular in Slovakia because people liked the acrobatic figures which could be learnt, and it became common for couples to focus 80% of their time training for these acrobatics. However training time should comprise of 50% footwork and 50% acrobatic training.</p> <p>Stefan Turok offered some advice for rock ‘n’ roll:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve children in the style. Children should ideally start at the age of 8-10 years. It can be difficult to involve children for safety reasons and the requirement of valid CRB checks. 2. Gymnastic clubs are a good source to approach to get interested members. 3. The best couples in the style train 4-5 times per week for approximately two hours per session. 4. Establish a national coach to assist in the selection of representation couples at international competitions. <p>Stefan concluded his presentation with the showing of a video, filmed in July 2008, of his dancing with a former rock ‘n’ roll partner from Slovakia highlighting various B-Class acrobatic figures and a selection of choreography.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>What Now? (Steve Romans)</p> <p>Steve Romans outlined various tasks for the BRRF to accomplish:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop dance style regulations for acrobatic rock ‘n’ roll in the UK. 2. Draw-up an anti-doping policy. 3. Investigate insurance for public liability / personal accidents and coaching. 4. Look into the role of a Child Protection Officer. 5. Launch a BRRF website. 6. Persuade UK rock ‘n’ roll competitions to adopt the competition rules set by the BRRF. 7. Aim to have IVDC (Inter Varsity Dance Competition) organised by the BRRF in 2009. 8. Be aware of changes to competition rules set by the WRRC and update members of the BRRF accordingly (this is the role of the Competitions Officer). 	
<p>11</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	

12	Close The meeting was closed at 9:40pm.	
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